

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
PRAIRIE HILLS PLAZA
July 18, 2018

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Deb Jendro, Kirsten Dvorak, Shannon Binstock, Jason Sutheimer, Becki Hoff, Bruce Murry, Robyn Throlson, Marshall Longie

Members Absent: Trevor Vannett, Uma Hoffmann, Tina Bay, Joseph Hall, Teresa Larsen, Kevin McDonough, Gillian Plenty Chief, Bruce Klootwyk, Matthew McCleary, Darcy Severson

Others Present: Aimee Volk, Laurie Skadsem, Barb Burghart, Patty Wanner

Kirsten Dvorak called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. A quorum was not present. The chair recommended that the SRC function as a Committee of a Whole.

National Capacity Building Institute – Barb Burghart, Kirsten Dvorak, and Laurie Skadsem

North Dakota was one of 12 states that participated in the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) which is a technical assistance grant program (no dollars are exchanged). They are currently working on data analysis and the Work Place Readiness Guide. The Workplace Readiness Guide is available on the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website at nd.gov/dpi. Several of the regions/schools gather data quarterly on students with emotional disorders to see what type of services have been provided to the student, how the student is doing in school and how services can be improved for that student to keep them engaged in school. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is piloting in several regions, VR counselors doing co-instruction in the classrooms (interviewing, job search, advocacy, etc.) Discussed the Job Coach Training Guide (also available on DPI website) and how it can be utilized.

A team consisting of DPI, private provider, parent, and VR attended the National Capacity Building Institute in Denver, CO. ND was recognized in the program as a state to come to if other states need technical assistance on how to collaborate. National organizations such as WINTAC and NTACT had many great things to say about transition in ND.

The group discussed Peer-to-Peer leadership class for students to take in high school which is being offered in the Bismarck Public School District. It is a natural support system. The ARC received a grant to make this program a state wide program.

Transition Process and Discussion – Barb Burghart

Discussed the process of VR and who would be eligible for VR services. The process includes intake and application, eligibility, a comprehensive assessment, transition assessment plan (TAP) and or Individual Plan for Employment (IPE), successful employment and closure.

Business Awards – Patty Wanner

The regions must submit their nomination by August 1. The ad-hoc committee must then submit their scores to Patty by August 29. Regions have been instructed to only submit nominations if they have one whereas in the past they were required to submit at least one. The goal is to award a truly deserving business. There will be one statewide winner. The subcommittee of Employment of People with Disabilities will be reviewing and making suggestions on how the business awards will work in the future.

April 19, 2018

Members Present: Robyn Throlson, Shannon Binstock, Kirsten Dvorak, Becki Hoff, Deb Jendro, Bruce Murry, Kevin McDonough, Matthew McCleary, Marshall Longie

Members Absent: Jodi Webb, Jason Sutheimer, Uma Hoffmann, Tina Bay, Joseph Hall, Teresa Larsen, Darcy Severson, Trevor Vannett, Gillian Plenty Chief, Bruce Klootwyk

Others Present: Aimee Volk, Lou Ann Nider

Kirsten Dvorak called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. A quorum was not present.

DVR Regional Updates – Fargo (Region V) – Curt Markel

- The Fargo region has 14 staff members (eight VR counselors, vision rehabilitation specialist (VRS), CAS, business support specialist, and the regional administrator. They have one person that will be testing for their certified rehabilitation counselor (CRC).
- The new space is working well (relocated January 2016). By having an assessment room they are able to complete more timely assessments.
- The yearly goal for applicants is at 69% (decrease in transition referrals), VR plans/service is at 72%, and the number employed is at 73% (have been one counselor short for about a year). The average caseload is 50.
- In Fargo the unemployment rate is at 2.5%. The top three employment sectors are healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. Several new businesses have opened in the Fargo area including banks, therapies/rehabilitation facilities, dentists, restaurants, and hotels.
- All counselors are identified to work with transition students (22 high schools and two transition programs are in the Fargo region).
 - West Fargo has proposed a third high school.

DVR Regional Updates – Dickinson (Region VIII) – Becki Hoff

- They have had one staff turnover which was filled in May. They were fully staffed as of 6/20/18. The staff includes two vocational rehabilitation counselors, one VRS, one support staff and one regional administrator.
- They serve eight counties in southwestern North Dakota. They serve three schools in Dickinson and 12 in the outlying area. They have 94 transition cases

currently and the VRS is serving 28 clients. There are 99 students receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) through the contract at Dickinson High School.

- They exceeded their goals for applications, IPEs, employer contacts, and Pre-ETS. They are struggling to meet their successful closure goal this year. The VRS has met the established goal for applications and is steadily getting new intakes. The VRS consulted with ND School Vision Services School for the Blind collaborated to complete a worksite assessment for a client which produced excellent recommendations that assisted the client.
- They share a Business Services Specialist with the Bismarck VR Office and look forward to meeting with him to begin discussing how this will take shape, as this will be the first time a Business Consultant has worked with the Dickinson Office.
- Local Economy/Employment:
 - As of May, Stark County's employment rate is 17,553, which is down 430 from May of 2017 and down by 5000 jobs from May 2013.
 - The unemployment rate is 2.2%, which is the same as the state of North Dakota and much lower than the national rate of 3.6%.
 - Sales taxes in both Dickinson and Stark County are both up significantly. New homes built in Dickinson so far this year has surpassed last year by 27.

Committee Chair Reports

Membership/Public Relations Committee – Aimee Volk

The Governor's office has appointed four new members to the Council. Shannon Binstock is representing a business/industry, Uma Hoffmann is representing the State Workforce Investment Act, Jodi Webb is representing Parent Training and Information, and Robyn Throlson is VR Director. They were all appointed on 7/1/2018. Currently, we are still seeking one position for business/industry representative.

The SRC has 17 voting members. To meet the 51% we need nine voting members to have a quorum present. Currently, 65% of the council has a self-disclosed disability.

On July 18, 2018 we had an orientation session for new members. This will be mandatory for all new members but it is available to anyone that wants to participate.

The Bylaws were sent out at the beginning of July. We are recommending changes however since we do not have a quorum we are unable to vote at this meeting.

Planning and Evaluation Committee – Kirsten Dvorak

Discussed changes to the Client Purchase policy to update payment from \$2500 to \$5000. They are also making a recommendation to update the Appeals Policy to make minor changes to language to make it easier to read. The council will recommend accepting these changes at the next meeting when a quorum is present.

DHS is introducing a bill during the next legislative session to move DVR to the Department of Labor.

Resource Committee – Becki Hoff

They demonstrated the “Shout out Board” which will be used in the VR hallway for a way of recognition.

Employment Committee – Bruce Murry, Chair

The Discovery process will have five new providers in the coming year. Discussed how it how the Discovery process works for across the populations. They would like to have it the Discovery process built into the developmental disabilities (DD) waiver. Discussed the DD payment system and the problems they have had and how it could impact VR.

Tribal Updates

Marshall Longie, Spirit Lake Vocational Rehabilitation Project

They have an excellent staff. They have met their goals for the year regarding number of consumers served, youth, and successful closures. They will have to reapply for funding in 2020. They typically get 30-40 individuals working per year.

2019 Meeting Dates – Kirsten Dvorak

Discussion was held on possible dates of:

- January 16, 2019
- April 17-18, 2019
- July 17-18, 2019
- October 15-16, 2019

Recommendations will be made at the next SRC meeting as voting was postponed until a quorum is present.

Budget Update – Robyn Throlson

A strategic review with a consultant was completed with VR. DHS is looking for “chunks” to cut out of the budget to meet the 10% budget reduction. At this time, VR is looking at a hold even budget pending further instruction.

Next meeting October 9-10, 2018.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.